

S-E-C-R-E-T

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19 May 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 12 May 1972 Meeting of USIB Representatives
to Discuss the Current Situation in Vietnam

1. Mr. Huizenga explained the origins of the meeting, detailing concerns expressed by Adm. Rectanus at the previous day's USIB, and the DCI's proposal that ONE convoke the USIB Representatives to further identify the principal topics of common concern and to exchange views pertaining to Chinese and Soviet interests in the current situations and their likely courses of action. Mr. Huizenga stressed that no coordinated paper was to result from these discussions at this time.

2. There followed a prolonged discussion based on an exposition of ONE views by Messrs. Huizenga and on Soviet and Chinese interests and likely courses. There was general agreement that vital interests of the two communist powers were not engaged in Hanoi's offensive in the south and that the closure of the ports and the bombing of the north did not require any hasty reaction by either power.

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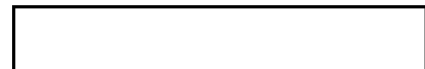
3. An important aspect in assessing Soviet and Chinese reactions was thought to be the level of military stockpiles presently available in North Vietnam and the communist judgment of the likely effectiveness of US efforts to curtail the flow of these and other essential supplies into North Vietnam. Reasoning by analogy from past experience, CIA, State, and DIA agreed that the present US efforts would not cut off the flow of essential supplies, even though the efforts and costs involved would greatly increase. The Air Force suggested that past experience was not a reliable guide since the present campaign contains new elements, i.e., it combines closure of the ports and naval bombardment with aerial interdiction, new and better ordnance is being employed, and additional key targets have been cleared for attack.

4. The group agreed it would be necessary to reserve judgment of the military effects of current US programs until a body of data on bomb damage, Hanoi's countermeasures, and possible Soviet and Chinese reactions had become available. Both DIA and CIA reported that as of that day, they were

receiving little if any data on targets or bomb damage.

5. Certain details on US mine laying operations were provided by an ONI Representative; these details were later said to be incomplete and in some respects, inaccurate. There was, however, continuing uncertainty as to how long the mines would remain active and as to the extent of hazard and difficulty which would be encountered in any effort at sweeping.

6. At the end, it was agreed to meet again on 16 May for a further exchange of views.



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